

In the Claims:

Kindly cancel claims 2 and 7 without prejudice and without disclaimer.

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) Method for closing off at least one tunnel extending across the width of a folding curtain, after a strengthening rod has been inserted into this tunnel, characterized in that a strengthening rod is provided in the tunnel, comprising at least at one extremity a number of pointed projections, and in that the tunnel is closed by pricking the said projections through the wall of the tunnel, wherein the said projections are movable in the longitudinal direction of the strengthening rod against a spring force.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously presented) Method according to claim 1, characterized in that the said projections are part of a terminal element, provided on the strengthening rod.

4. (Previously presented) Method according to claim 3, characterized in that the said terminal element is carried out in the form of a sleeve provided on the extremity of the strengthening rod.

5. (Currently amended) Method according to claim 3, characterized in that the terminal element is provided with a force generating member ~~coiled spring~~ in order to exert a spring force on the said projections.

6. (Currently amended) Folding curtain comprising at least one tunnel extending across the width of the curtain, which is provided with a strengthening rod, characterized in that the said strengthening rod comprises a number of pointed projections at least at one extremity and in that the said projections are pricking through the wall of the tunnel in order to close the tunnel, wherein the said projections are movable in the longitudinal direction of the strengthening rod against a spring force.

7. (Canceled)
8. (Previously presented) Folding curtain according to claim 6, characterized in that the said projections are part of a terminal element provided on the strengthening rod.
9. (Currently amended) Folding curtain according to claim 8, characterized in that the said terminal element comprises a sleeve-shaped jacket containing a ~~coiled spring~~ force generating member and an element provided with the said pointed projections and in that the element is movable against the spring force of the force generating member ~~coiled spring~~.
10. (Currently amended) Folding curtain according to claim [[9]] 6, characterized in that the element is provided with pointed projections made of synthetic material.
11. (Currently amended) Strengthening rod for a folding curtain, characterized in that at least one extremity of the said strengthening rod comprises a number of pointed projections movable against a spring force in the longitudinal direction of the strengthening rod and in that the said projections are provided to prick through the wall of the tunnel, in order to close the tunnel.
12. (Previously presented) Strengthening rod according to claim 11, characterized in that the said projections are part of a terminal element provided on the strengthening rod.
13. (Currently amended) Strengthening rod according to claim 11, characterized in that the said strengthening rod comprises a sleeve-shaped jacket containing a ~~coiled spring~~ force generating member and an element provided with the said pointed projections and in that the element is movable against the spring force of the ~~coiled spring~~ force generating member from a first to a second position, the element in its second position being situated within the space surrounded by the sleeve-shaped jacket.
14. (Previously presented) Strengthening rod according to claim 11, characterized in that the said strengthening rod is provided in a folding curtain according to any one of the claims 6 up to

and including 10.

15. (New) Strengthening rod according to claim 5, wherein the force generating member is a coiled spring.

16. (New) Strengthening rod according to claim 9, wherein the force generating member is a coiled spring.

17. (New) Strengthening rod according to claim 13, wherein the force generating member is a coiled spring.